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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/816,447	03/26/2001	Fumitaka Toyomura	35 .G2756	6745

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FITZPATRICK CELLA HARPER & SCINTO
30 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA
NEW YORK, NY 10112

EXAMINER

TERESINSKI, JOHN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2858

DATE MAILED: 06/27/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/816,447

Applicant(s)

TOYOMURA ET AL.

Examiner

John Teresinski

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on amendment filed 11 April 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-8 and 10-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2 and 9 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1,3-8,10-15,17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,300,555 to Kondo et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,204,443 to Kiso et al..

Regarding claims 1,7,8, 14,17 and 19, Kondo et al. disclose a method of testing a solar cell module including performing a withstand/breakdown voltage test between a live electrical section electrically connected to the solar cell and a conductor section of the outer housing/frame (column 2 lines 20-26). Kondo et al. does not disclose applying a voltage between the live electrical section and the conductor section. Kiso et al. disclose a solar cell module including a voltage withstand/breakdown test wherein a voltage is applied between the solar cell module power input and an electrolyte solution surrounding the module after the withstand/breakdown test has been preformed (column 18 lines 44-65). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include applying a voltage as taught by Kiso et al. into Kondo et al. to whether a leakage current that has occurred (column 18 lines 58-65).

Regarding claims 3 and 10, Kondo et al. disclose the outer housing as a bottom surface reinforcement member for reinforcing the bottom surface of the solar panel (column 2 lines 3-27, Fig. 10 elements 1,5 and 33).

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Regarding claims 4 and 11, Kondo et al. disclose a metal plate/support means (column 3 lines 54-56).

Regarding claims 5 and 12, Kondo et al. does not disclose a stainless steel plate. Kiso et al. disclose a stainless steel plate (column 14 lines 8-9).

Regarding claims 6 and 13 Kondo et al. disclose a utility power line/lead out electrode to supply power to the solar cell (column 5 lines 34-52).

Regarding claim 15, Kondo et al. disclose encapsulating the solar cell with a protective covering/sealing member (column 5 lines 27-33).

Claims 16 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kondo et al. and Kiso et al. as applied to claims 1 and 8 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. Tamechika et al..

Regarding claims 16 and 18, Kondo et al. in view of Kiso et al. does not disclose an insulation resistance test. Tamechika et al. discloses testing a solar panel by performing an insulation resistance test (Abstract). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include an insulation resistance test as taught by Tamechika et al. into Kondo et al. and Kiso et al. for the purpose of properly diagnosing solar cell panels for abnormalities to prevent unexpected failure (Abstract).

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Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2 and 9 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Regarding claims 2 and 9:

The primary reason for indicating allowable subject matter in claims 2 and 9 is the inclusion of alternating current voltage as the as the voltage applied to the between the live electrical section and the conductor section. It is these features found in the claim, as they are claimed in the combination that has not been found, taught or suggested by the prior art of record, which makes this claim allowable over the prior art.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John Teresinski whose telephone number is (703) 305-4746. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30 - 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, N. Le can be reached on (703) 308-0750. The fax phone numbers for the

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organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872 9319 for regular communications and (703) 872 9318 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

ST
JT

June 24, 2003



N. Le
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 2800